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# Planners Have Doubts On 'Super Cabinet'

## 'Demotions' Feared By Key Reagan Aide

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The incoming Reagan administration is having second thoughts about the idea of having a "super-Cabinet" help the president make major policy decisions, according to a top Reagan aide.

James A. Baker III, who will be chief of staff in the Reagan White House, yesterday told reporters some "red flags" were being raised against the proposal and that it had not yet been decided whether to adopt it.

As set forth by Edwin Meese III, who will be counselor to Reagan in the new administration, the super-Cabinet would include the secretaries of defense, state and treasury and the CIA director.

"If you promote four Cabinet members, you demote 11 others and may make some congressional committee chairmen mad," said Baker. "The arguments for it are that the president needs to reduce the number of people in the decision-making process. The president will always rely on some Cabinet members more than others." Baker said that a decision on whether to set up a super-Cabinet will not be made until next month.

The Reagan transition team had in mind a sort of executive committee of the Cabinet that would sit regularly on matters involving national security and the economy.

Meese's original idea was that the Cabinet members concerned with human problems, resources and development would not be directly affected by national decisions requiring swift policy action.

In practice, the "super-Cabinet" group corresponds almost exactly with the statutory membership in the National Security Council and it may turn out that the NSC will evolve into the smaller group Meese has in mind.

Reagan became accustomed to regular meetings with Meese and his six-member Cabinet in his eight years as governor of California.

The NSC requires attendance of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and in practice presidents have brought in other Cabinet members for NSC meetings from time to time.

Baker also said the Reagan White House will upgrade the congressional liaison office, to be headed by Max Friedesdorf.

He said the new administration considers the legislative liaison staff so important that it will be moved back into the White House from the Executive Office Building. He said he thought it was a mistake for the Carter administration to move the Congressional Relations office over to the EOB.

The transition team also announced yesterday that longtime Reagan aide and confidant Michael K. Deaver has been appointed assis-

tant to the president and deputy chief of staff. Baker said Deaver, who is now co-partner in the public relations firm of Deaver & Hannaford, will be in charge of Reagan's appointments office, of advance and scheduling for the president, the military office in the White House and the First Lady's East Wing staff.

Baker said the transition team is still searching for a White House press secretary and has interviewed a number of men and women, including some journalists. Jim Brady, spokesman for the Washington transition office, also is under consideration for the job.

Baker, who will be in overall charge of the press operation, said the intention is to have the press secretary report directly to Reagan. "Obviously, the press secretary won't have access going in," said Baker. "But if we get the right person, there will be access to the president."

The chief of staff stopped short of declaring that Martin Anderson will be domestic affairs adviser and that Richard V. Allen will be assistant to the president for national security affairs, but strongly hinted that both men are likely to end up in those jobs. Allen advised Reagan on foreign affairs during the cam-

Baker said Allen's future has not yet been determined, but he added, "Off the top of my head, I think Allen will be appointed, but the scope of the job will have a far lower profile" than under Henry A. Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski.

He said the transition team anticipated both criticism and support for the nomination of retired Gen. Alexander Haig to be Secretary of State. "We expect full, complete hearings," said Baker.

"Republican leaders at Capitol Hill have assured us that the general will be confirmed, but the president-elect gave some consideration to the fact that the hearings could last longer than usual. Some senators, as a result of their staff work, have assured us that there is nothing serious in Haig's record as White House chief of staff in the last months of President Nixon's term."

Baker said that Reagan has made it clear to all nominees for Cabinet rank that they will have a voice in the selection of sub-cabinet assistants but that the White House also will have much to say about the choice of undersecretaries, assistant secretaries and deputies in the various departments.

The new White House will have at least one position that does not exist in the Carter administration. The Reagan team expects to appoint a staff secretary to take charge of the paper flow.

There also will be a staff director and a Cabinet secretary, but Baker said he will rely on the new position of staff secretary to see that information is routed to all sections of the White House staff and government departments.